



KYRGYZ POLITICS: THE 2021 CONSTITUTION AND ITS POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS

Haluk ALKAN 

Prof. Dr., Department of Political Science and International Relations, Istanbul Ticaret University, Istanbul, Türkiye
halkan@ticaret.edu.tr

Research Article

Received: 07.12.2025

Accepted: 07.01.2026

Citation Information: ALKAN, H. (2026). Kyrgyz Politics: The 2021 Constitution and Its Potential Implications, *International Journal of Politics and Security*, 8(1), 1-25. Doi: 10.53451/ijps.1837589.

Abstract

This article aims to examine the political consequences of Kyrgyzstan's new 2021 Constitution in light of political constitutionalism and empirical institutionalism approaches. The political dimension of constitutions is primarily related to the nature of the political objectives that play a decisive role during the constitution-making process. Empirical institutionalism focuses on the effects of the institutional formulations developed by key actors involved in constitution-making on the functioning of political life. Kyrgyzstan constitutes a striking case in this regard, as political competition in the country is shaped by confrontational dynamics, which directly affect the constitution-making process. The study first addresses the main characteristics of the post-independence constitutionalization process in Kyrgyzstan. It then analyzes the political system shaped by the 2021 Constitution and its possible implications for political life.

Keywords: constitutional politics, empirical Institutionalism, kyrgyzstan politics, president Caparov, clan politics.

INTRODUCTION

This article seeks to analyze the system introduced by Kyrgyzstan's new 2021 Constitution and its political implications. Conceptually, the study approaches the issue within the framework of the political consequences of constitutions, employing an empirical institutionalist methodology. The concept of the "political nature of constitutions" highlights the importance of constitutional designs that determine political processes, asserting that these designs produce outcomes beyond a constitution's legal character (Bellamy, 2023). Empirical institutionalism, relying on constitutions and other legal regulations regarding political institutions, focuses on how institutional formulations crafted by constitution-makers and lawmakers affect the functioning of the political system (Peters, 2012, p. 87-91). Kyrgyzstan is an interesting case in this respect, as confrontational political relations are highly influential, and political actors frequently resort to constitution-making to serve their own objectives in political competition. Moreover, the political instability caused by repeated transfers of power





has significant implications for regional security. The study will first examine the main feature of constitutional changes in Kyrgyzstan following independence and will then analyze the institutional characteristics and political implications of the 2021 Constitution within this context.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF POST-INDEPENDENCE CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN KYRGYZSTAN

Presidential–Legislative Tension

The trajectory of constitutional development in Kyrgyzstan has differed considerably from that of other post-Soviet states that gained independence following the dissolution of the Soviet Union. In most regional states, political leaders adopted constitutions that concentrated power in the presidency and, aided by electoral systems designed to produce compliant parliaments, created structures resembling that of Russia. In Kyrgyzstan, however, such efforts never produced similar results. Instead, competition and conflict between presidents and regional leaders within parliament have been the defining forces shaping constitutional development (Alkan, 2012, p. 61).

The primary reason for this divergence lies in the absence of an institutionalized leadership structure within the bureaucracy and the Communist Party during the transition from the Soviet system to independence. Kyrgyzstan entered independence with a leadership vacuum. Power struggles between northern and southern groups, as well as between conservatives and reformists within the Communist Party of Kyrgyzstan, shaped political developments during the transition period. These conflicts produced a leadership crisis, ultimately resolved when Askar Akayev—brought in from outside—assumed the presidency through Moscow’s mediation (Kulikova, 2007). The resulting weak leadership structure, coupled with successive presidents’ attempts to sideline or exclude parliamentary and extra-parliamentary opposition, became the engine of political crises. After every election, the composition of parliament generated coalitions capable of opposing the president (Alkan, 2009, p. 364). Consequently, a leadership unable to fully dominate state institutions and regional, fragmented, and shifting opposition networks formed the main actors of political conflict (Çorotekin, 2002, p. 267). This tension culminated in the ousting of the country’s first president, Askar Akayev, through a popular uprising in 2005, followed by the removal of his successor, Kurmanbek Bakiyev, in 2010. After the 2011 presidential election, the rivalry between President Almazbek Atambayev and Prime Minister Sooronbay Jeenbekov laid the groundwork for renewed instability, which ultimately culminated in another popular uprising in 2020 that



brought Sadyr Japarov to power (Gyene, 2022). Each extraordinary transfer of power resulted from cooperation among regional opposition leaders within or outside parliament. Yet similar conflicts re-emerged among newly empowered actors after each transition. Moreover, every shift in power introduced a new constitution and institutional redesign.

Weak Party System and Clan-Based Politics

Another defining feature of constitutional development in Kyrgyzstan is the weakness of its party system and the strong influence of regionally based clans. Although the country formally operates a multiparty system, it has not produced nationally organized programmatic parties. Instead, political parties have largely become vehicles for regional leaders, and political change has often enabled local elites to act independently of parties altogether (Dzhurayev, 2025). During disputes between the executive and legislature, presidents at times attempted constitutional reforms inspired by the dominant-party models of Russia or Kazakhstan, while at other times they pursued changes that empowered local leaders within parliament.

This pattern has deep historical roots. During the Soviet period, nomadic tribes were settled through compulsory sedentarization and integrated into collective farms, allowing traditional tribal structures to persist within administrative arrangements. After independence, this background continued to shape political divisions, often aligning conflicts with tribal alliances (Collins, 2002, p. 144; Khamidov, 2002; Temirkoulov, 2004, p. 94). The principal clan regions in Kyrgyzstan include Talas, Sayaks, Chüy, Issyk-Kul, Kemin, Naryn, and the southeastern groups. Historically, northern groups dominated political leadership under Soviet rule. Akayev, Atambayev, and Japarov come from the north, while Bakiyev and Jeenbekov represent southern constituencies. Regions themselves contain internal sub-alliances (ICG, 2001, p. 6). The dominance of clan-based networks significantly weakens the role of national political parties, as parliamentary elections remain heavily influenced by personal and local patronage structures (Ishiyama & Kennedy, 2001, pp. 1184-1185). As a result, in Kyrgyzstan, regional networks and personal relationships consistently shape political outcomes, directly affecting constitution-making processes as well.

Weak Constitutional Formulations

Against the background described above, all political crises in the country ultimately turned into constitutional problems, and because political institutions could not function, constitutional amendments were used as an instrument to overcome crises. The country's first



constitution underwent eight amendments between 1994 and the end of 2007. Except for one, all these amendments were carried out through unilateral referendum decisions initiated by the president. The essential characteristic of the four amendments implemented between 1994 and 2003 was that they aimed to strengthen the executive by sidelining the parliament (Kolstoe, 1995, pp. 237-238; Matveeva, 1999, p. 28; Alkan, 2009, p. 363). When the tension between the president and parliament turned into an open conflict in 2003, parliament was able to regain the powers it had previously lost, in exchange for granting broad immunity to Akayev and his family (Radnitz, 2005, pp. 405-410). However, this time, allegations of fraud in the 2005 parliamentary elections triggered mass street protests, which resulted in the overthrow of Akayev.

This change of power was achieved through an alliance between southern political and bureaucratic figures who had held office during Akayev's presidency and local opposition leaders who traditionally held seats in parliament. Kurmanbek Bakiyev, who had served as Akayev's prime minister until 2002, emerged as the leader of this political shift and became the second president of the country after independence (Radnitz, 2005, p. 410). The period following the transfer of power resembled a repetition of what had occurred between 1991 and 2005. The struggle between President Bakiyev's desire to consolidate his authority and the resistance of opposing groups caused a series of political crises in the country during 2006 and 2007 (Fumagalli, 2016, pp. 183-185). The 2007 Constitution was adopted within this context and as a result of Bakiyev's attempts to strengthen his rule. Drawing on the examples of Russia and Kazakhstan, the primary aim of the new arrangements was to create a compliant parliamentary composition. The constitution, which entered into force through a referendum on 21 October 2007, preserved the strategic powers of the president while simultaneously attracting attention with its amendments that ostensibly strengthened parliament. However, a closer look at the system reveals that the entire design aimed at creating a parliament controlled by a dominant party (Sershen, 2007). Parallel to the constitutional amendments, the electoral system was also revised: the entire country was organized as a single electoral district, and only political parties presenting national candidate lists were permitted to participate in elections. These changes significantly restricted the influence of regional politicians. Indeed, in the subsequent elections, for the first time, a single party—Ak-Jol, established by Bakiyev—secured an outright majority in the Jogorku Kenesh (Kyrgyzstan Parliament). The most significant outcome of the early parliamentary elections was the exclusion of traditional



opposition figures who had previously dominated the legislature. Although the new system provided Bakiyev with greater room to implement his preferred policies, it also increased the tendency of extra-parliamentary opposition groups to resort to extraordinary methods and expanded their social support base. As a matter of fact, the increase in public service prices at the beginning of 2010 allowed the marginalized opposition to garner public support and unite against the weak ruling network, triggering a new process that would ultimately result in Bakiyev's removal from power (Alkan, 2011, pp. 281-284).

With the 2010 Constitution, introduced after the change of power, the powers of the Jogorku Kenesh were strengthened. Under the new constitution, the president's authority to directly call a constitutional referendum and to submit draft legislation was removed. The presidential term was limited to a single term. With the 2010 Constitution, parliament regained its balancing powers over the government. Accordingly, parliament obtained the authority to approve ministers other than those responsible for defense and national security, to approve the cabinet as a whole, to oversee the government's development programs, and to issue votes of no confidence against the sitting government. The 2010 Constitution introduced the principle that the members of the Jogorku Kenesh, which it defined as the highest representative body of the country, would be elected through a proportional representation system. Another striking provision stipulated that regardless of electoral success, no political party could hold more than 65 seats in the 120-member parliament. This unusual rule produced a situation in which a party could obtain only a fragile majority and could govern alone only precariously. In other words, while the powers of the legislature were expanded, the formation of a strong majority within parliament was constitutionally restricted. Although the 2010 Constitution limited presidential powers and strengthened the roles of parliament and the government, it did not create a framework within which either institution could effectively exercise the powers granted to them. The Constitution made the roles of political actors extremely significant in the functioning of political life and, through its gaps, created potential areas of instability (Alkan, 2011, p. 299).

Almazbek Atambayev, who was elected president in the elections held on 30 October 2011, was able to govern the country relatively successfully until 2017 by pursuing a careful political strategy despite the weaknesses of the constitution. In the presidential elections held that year, a peaceful transfer of power was achieved for the first time in the country. Atambayev handed over his office to Sooronbay Jeenbekov, who had served as prime minister during his



term. However, shortly thereafter, Jeenbekov's desire to expand his power within the system resulted in a confrontation with established opposition leaders in the Jogorku Kenesh and local political actors. Jeenbekov's attempt in 2019 to arrest his predecessor Atambayev led to violent clashes in Atambayev's hometown, Koi Tash. Atambayev was arrested, and his health deteriorated due to harsh treatment in prison. Allegations of electoral fraud in the 2020 elections triggered widespread violent protests across the country. During this process, Sadyr Japarov—who is from the north and who had also gained popularity in the south due to his stance against the Uzbek minority—quickly rose to power. Japarov formalized his rule in the presidential elections held in January 2021, which had a very low turnout (39.16%). Throughout the events and during the election campaign, Japarov persistently emphasized the inadequacy of the existing constitution and stressed the need to establish a stronger state structure (Gyene, 2022, pp. 77-81; Doolotkeldieva, 2023, p. 111). This approach became the decisive factor in shaping political institutions in Kyrgyzstan's 2021 Constitution.

EVALUATION OF THE 2021 CONSTITUTION OF KYRGYZSTAN¹

The new constitution adopted in Kyrgyzstan on 11 April 2021 was shaped, as noted, as a result of the events that began in the country in 2020. With this constitution, the constitutional system of the country was restructured on the basis of a presidential system. Below, the main features of the constitution will first be highlighted, followed by an examination of the structure of powers introduced by the new constitution, which is of particular importance for our subject.

In the preamble of the constitution, it is stated that the constitutional text was drafted “following the traditions of our ancestors... based on the principles of the magnificent Manas... as a reflection of the unwavering will to preserve and strengthen the state structure.” In addition to the emphasis on the historical heritage of the national identity, it is striking that the preamble explicitly notes that the will underlying the drafting of the constitution is shaped around the strengthening of the state structure. Article 1 of the constitution declares that the authority to speak on behalf of the people belongs exclusively to the President and the Jogorku Kenesh. Here again, in line with the purpose underlying the drafting of the new constitution, it is expressed that the two state authorities directly elected by the people hold the sole authority to

¹ In evaluating the text of the 2021 Constitution of Kyrgyzstan, the English text published on the official website of the Constitutional Court of Kyrgyzstan was used as the basis. Constitution of The Kyrgyz Republic, <https://constcot.kg/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/constitution-of-the-kyrgyz-republic.pdf> (01.11.2025). Dr. Ömer Faruk Karaman also provided assistance in translating the legal texts written in Kyrgyz Turkish used in this evaluation. I would like to express my gratitude to him.



speak on behalf of the public, thereby indirectly strengthening the position of the President of Kyrgyzstan. This emphasis on the person of the president, as opposed to the parliament as a collective body, is consistent with the purpose of the constitution as indicated above. One of the central issues in Kyrgyzstan's constitutional politics has long been the president's authority to directly call for a constitutional referendum, and this authority is expanded in the 2021 constitution. Article 2 of the constitution states that laws and matters of national importance may be submitted directly to a referendum. The relevant article also lists the president among those authorized to exercise this power. Here too, the president is granted a superior position vis-à-vis parliament, which as a collective body must reach a certain majority to call a referendum. The president thus acquires the autonomous authority to submit any law, or any matter he considers important, to a popular vote. Considering the transformation of political life in the country since independence, it may be said that this provision grants the president a very strong power in practice. Parlett notes that allowing laws and "other matters of national importance" to be submitted to a referendum opens the door to open-ended interpretations, which may potentially weaken the legislative role of the Jogorku Kenesh (Parlett, 2021: p. 7).

Another provision that may be seen as a reaction to the political experience of Kyrgyzstan since independence is Article 5 of the constitution. This article states that the forcible seizure of state power, the unlawful retention of power, and the usurpation of the functions and authorities of state bodies and local self-government bodies are prohibited, and that any form of usurpation of state authority shall be considered a grave crime. However, if this article is read differently, the vague expressions used to define these constitutional crimes could later be employed against any elected authority and could open the door to judicial processes under this article.

One of the characteristics of the 2021 Constitution is that on many strategic issues, the constitution is content with limited provisions, leaving the details to be regulated by law. For example, Article 10 of the constitution introduces a ban on censorship, yet states that the protection of the younger generation constitutes an exception at the constitutional level, and includes the expression that activities contrary to the moral and ethical values of the Kyrgyz people and to the public conscience shall be prohibited by law. The exceptions regulated in Article 10 are quite vague and open to multiple interpretations. Who will determine the moral and ethical values of the Kyrgyz people? The relevant article also notes that the law to be issued regarding censorship will include, in the form of a list, those activities that may be subject to



prohibitions on access and distribution. This content may allow for restrictions far beyond those stated in the Constitution to be introduced through legislation. The fact that the First Section of the Constitution opens a separate title on the spiritual and cultural foundations of society (before the section regulating rights and freedoms), and the emphasis on traditions and customs, national and moral values, and patriotism, strengthens the possibility that these references may be used as normative standards in the interpretation of human rights and fundamental freedoms regulated in the constitution (Venice Commission, 2021, p. 10). Similarly, while Article 29 regulates the principle of privacy of private life, it stipulates that restrictions on this right shall be regulated by law. The same article also states that restrictions may be imposed by court order.

The general characteristic of the 2021 Constitution with respect to rights and freedoms is that restrictions on rights and freedoms are left to be regulated by law. Therefore, to the extent permitted by the balance of power between the president and the legislature, the restrictions on rights and freedoms written in the constitution may be expanded through legislation. In addition, a normative framework is created that may have a restrictive impact on rights and freedoms. The separation of powers under the new constitution shall be analyzed in further detail below.

Strong Presidency

The 2021 Constitution strengthens the institution of the presidency compared to the previous constitution. The constitution characterizes the presidency as the highest authority of the state and as the guarantor of the unity of the nation and state power (Article 66.1). The description of the presidency in the constitution as the “highest-level authority” of the state indicates that it is positioned not only above the executive branch but also above all state powers and authorities. This provision gives the president an enhanced position in the event of any disagreement with the legislative or judicial branches. Likewise, the statements in the constitution indicating that the president will determine the main directions of the internal and external policies of the state and ensure the unity of state power, as well as the coordination and interaction of state organs, reinforce this elevated status (Parlett, 2021, pp. 9-10).

According to the constitution, the president is elected for a term of five years and may serve at least two terms. Thus, Kyrgyzstan abandons the principle of a single presidential term that existed in the previous constitution. Persons who have reached the age of 35, have a good command of the state language, have resided in the Republic for at least 15 years, and have



collected at least 30,000 signatures from voters may run as candidates. Persons elected to the office must suspend their membership in political parties and may not engage in political party-related activities. The president appoints the Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers, ministers, deputy ministers, and other members of the Cabinet with the approval of the Jogorku Kenesh and decides on their resignations. The president may directly remove from office persons appointed to these positions. The president has the authority to directly appoint and dismiss executive authorities other than the offices specified above.

Paragraph 6 of Article 116, which regulates the transitional provisions of the constitution, states that the six-year term of office previously established for the presidency under the former constitution will also apply to the elected president. In other words, the five-year term stipulated in the new constitution will not apply to President Japarov during his first term, and the current president will be able to serve one additional year during this term. Furthermore, Temporary Article 4 of the constitution provides that “with the entry into force of the constitution, the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic shall be considered to have resigned. Until the Cabinet of Ministers is formed in accordance with the constitution, the president shall temporarily form the Cabinet of Ministers and appoint the heads of other executive bodies,” thereby granting President Japarov a very broad discretionary space during the transition period. On the basis of these two provisions, President Japarov obtained the initiative to determine the cadres that would shape future policy without being subject to constitutional constraints.

Article 70 of the constitution regulates the power of referendum. As discussed above, the new constitution expands the president’s authority to call a referendum. According to this article, the president may independently decide to call a referendum. The constitution grants this authority to 300,000 voters and to the Jogorku Kenesh, provided that the latter reaches at least an absolute majority. However, whether through voter initiative or a decision of the Jogorku Kenesh, the decision to hold a referendum ultimately rests with the president. In addition, the president has the authority to renew parliamentary elections and call early elections, subject to the constitutional conditions. The president also has the legal power to dissolve local councils and renew their elections under circumstances specified by law. The constitution does not regulate the reasons for exercising this authority, nor does it introduce intermediate conditions such as suspension of powers, prior consultation, or obligatory court decision. Instead, it leaves wide room for the justification to be determined by statute.



The constitution grants the president the authority to submit draft laws to the Jogorku Kenesh. The president also has the power to refuse to approve laws adopted by the Jogorku Kenesh and return them for reconsideration. Once returned, a law may be resubmitted to the president for approval only if the Jogorku Kenesh adopts it with at least a two-thirds majority. This provision demonstrates that the constitution grants the president a strengthened veto power over the legislative process.

The president presents an annual report to parliament, sends an annual message, may convene the Jogorku Kenesh for an extraordinary session, and determines the subjects to be discussed in such sessions. An interesting provision is found in Article 70 of the constitution: according to this article, the president may attend the sessions of the Jogorku Kenesh and speak during those sessions. This arrangement may potentially produce consequences that could disrupt the balance of powers in presidential systems based on strict separation of powers. According to the Parliamentary Rules of Procedure, the president, the Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers, the permanent representative of the presidency to the Jogorku Kenesh, and the Akyikatchy (ombudsman) may not only attend parliamentary sessions but also participate in open or closed meetings of parliamentary committees and express opinions (Venice Commission, 2023, p.13).

The president also possesses several strategic powers related to the judiciary. The president submits to the Jogorku Kenesh candidates nominated by the Council of Judges for membership in the Constitutional Court and the Supreme Court. The president also submits to the Jogorku Kenesh those members of these two courts whom he seeks to dismiss. The president appoints the nominees to local courts proposed by the Council of Judges. The president may dismiss local judges under circumstances determined by the constitution and constitutional law. The president appoints the presidents of the Constitutional Court and the Supreme Court based on nominations from the Council of Judges and with the approval of the Jogorku Kenesh, and may dismiss these court presidents under circumstances prescribed by the constitution and constitutional law. The president appoints the Prosecutor General with the approval of parliament and may dismiss the Prosecutor General with the participation of at least half of the deputies. The president also nominates a candidate to parliament for the presidency of the Central Bank. The president appoints the members of the Central Bank upon the recommendation of the bank's president and may dismiss members under circumstances prescribed by law.



Another strategic power of the president is the authority to appoint half of the members of the Central Election and Referendum Commission (CERC), subject to the approval of the Jogorku Kenesh. The president may also submit to the Jogorku Kenesh the names of commission members whose dismissal he seeks. According to the constitution, the President of Kyrgyzstan may declare a state of emergency throughout the entire country or in a specific region. Such decisions must be communicated to the Jogorku Kenesh. The president may likewise declare mobilization or martial law, subject to submission to parliament for evaluation.

Under Article 73 of the Constitution, the Jogorku Kenesh is empowered to dismiss the President for constitutional and legal violations, as well as for unlawful interference in legislative and judicial proceedings. The Jogorku Kenesh may decide to initiate proceedings with at least a two-thirds majority of its total membership, based on the proposal of the relevant committee. This decision is sent to the Prosecutor General and the Constitutional Court. Upon the confirmation report of the Prosecutor General and the procedural compliance report of the Constitutional Court, the Jogorku Kenesh may decide to remove the president from office with at least a two-thirds majority of its total membership. As can be seen, in addition to requiring a highly qualified majority for both the initiation and conclusion of proceedings, the reports of two institutions whose appointments are significantly influenced by the president (the Prosecutor General and the Constitutional Court) play a decisive role in the removal process. According to Article 74 of the constitution, if the president leaves office before the expiration of the term, the Speaker of the Jogorku Kenesh assumes presidential duties until a new president is elected. Interestingly, the article states that if the Speaker does not wish to exercise presidential powers, then the Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers shall assume the duties instead. The constitution states that the status of former presidents will be regulated by law. In a country where political crises, and even conflicts, have frequently occurred around the institution of the presidency, such a provision is particularly noteworthy. A president elected to office may, on the basis of this article, amend the law to determine a new status for himself and former presidents or introduce restrictive arrangements.

When the constitutional provisions regulating the status of the president are examined, it is clear that the approach emphasized in the general evaluation above is continued here as well. Strategic matters concerning powers and relations with other institutions are not regulated in the constitution but are instead left to constitutional laws or ordinary legislation. The status of former presidents, the powers to dismiss members of the Central Bank, the Constitutional



Court, the Supreme Court, and local judges are powers to be exercised within the framework of law. Certain issues that should be clarified constitutionally also remain ambiguous. For instance, the status of the Council of Judges, which plays a determinative role in the appointment of high-level judges, is not regulated in detail in the constitution. As will be discussed later, the only descriptive constitutional provision regarding the Council is Article 96, which refers to the Council's composition in general terms.

Executive Branch

Article 89 of the constitution stipulates that executive authority belongs to the president. The structure and composition of the Cabinet of Ministers are determined by the president. The president directs the activities of the executive branch and presides over the Cabinet of Ministers. The president may annul the decisions and actions of the Cabinet and its subordinate bodies. The Cabinet also includes a Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers. The Chairman of the Cabinet and the ministers are appointed upon the president's nomination and with the approval of the Jogorku Kenesh. The president may dismiss the Chairman of the Cabinet or any minister. The resignation of the Chairman of the Cabinet does not mean the termination of the Cabinet's mandate. The acceptance or rejection of the resignation of ministers lies within the authority of the president. The constitution does not contain explicit provisions regarding the powers of the Chair of the Cabinet vis-à-vis the president, who presides over Cabinet meetings. When these arrangements are considered together with the extensive executive powers granted to the president, it strengthens the impression that the Chairman of the Cabinet is conceived as a government official responsible for ensuring the implementation of the president's decisions (Martyniuk et al., 2023, p. 257).

There are also certain ambiguities in the constitution concerning the responsibility of the Cabinet and other high-level executive authorities to parliament. First, the constitution states that if the Jogorku Kenesh finds the state budget implementation reports of the ministries to be unsatisfactory, the responsibility of the Cabinet members concerned shall be reviewed by the president. According to the Rules of Procedure, the reports submitted to the Jogorku Kenesh are approved by an absolute majority of the total number of deputies. However, neither the constitution nor the Rules of Procedure specifies the procedure to be followed in the event of rejection (Venice Commission, 2023, p. 40). The Parliamentary Rules of Procedure establish that the approval threshold for ministers nominated by the president is at least half of the total number of deputies (not an absolute majority). Neither the constitution nor the Rules of



Procedure includes any provision regarding what happens if the Jogorku Kenesh refuses to approve the government or a particular minister. Similarly, the procedure for dismissing Cabinet members is not clearly regulated in the constitution. The Rules of Procedure state that the Jogorku Kenesh may adopt a decision to dismiss a minister by an absolute majority of the total number of deputies. When evaluated together with the Parliamentary Rules of Procedure, it may be inferred that the president could keep in office a minister for whom a dismissal decision has been adopted. According to the Rules of Procedure, the president must notify the Jogorku Kenesh of such a decision within ten days (Venice Commission, 2021, pp. 14-15; Venice Commission, 2023, p. 48, 50) .

Ambiguous Legislature: The Jogorku Kenesh and the People's Kurultai

The Jogorku Kenesh

The Jogorku Kenesh, the legislative body of Kyrgyzstan, consists of 90 deputies elected for a five-year term. The new constitution reduced the number of seats in the Jogorku Kenesh from 120 to 90. The constitution introduces a recall mechanism for deputies (though the constitutional text does not include an explanatory provision regarding this mechanism). Under Kyrgyzstan's political conditions, this arrangement may potentially weaken opposition deputies in the face of the president and his supporters in parliament, whose removal is tied to highly stringent conditions (Bisarya, 2022, p. 51). The constitution raises the minimum age of eligibility for parliamentary election to 25. It also merely states that the procedure for electing members to the Jogorku Kenesh shall be determined by law. Consequently, the president and the legislative majority possess wide discretion in determining the content of the electoral system (Venice Commission, 2021, p. 16).

Article 78 of the constitution states that action may be taken against a deputy with the approval of a majority of the total number of deputies, excluding cases of being caught in the act (in flagrante delicto). According to Article 80, the Jogorku Kenesh has the authority to interpret laws. If a legislature wishes to clarify the meaning of a law it has enacted, it may do so by amending the law or adding supplementary provisions (Partlett, p. 2). The fact that the constitution grants the Jogorku Kenesh authority in a domain that properly belongs to constitutional adjudication may lead to conflicts of competence in the future. The parliamentary Rules of Procedure state that the authority of the Jogorku Kenesh to interpret laws shall be exercised during the lawmaking stage. At this stage, individuals and legal entities may submit proposals for official interpretation to the relevant committee. The committees of the Jogorku



Kenesh may accept or reject these proposals. The official interpretation is subject to the procedural rules for deliberating on laws, and once adopted by parliament, it becomes binding (Venice Commission, 2023, p. 28).

The parliament may call upon the president to initiate a referendum. The Jogorku Kenesh has the authority, with the approval of at least half of its total membership, to appoint judges of the Supreme Court and the Constitutional Court from among the candidates determined by the Council of Judges and proposed by the president, and likewise to dismiss these judges upon the president's proposal. The Jogorku Kenesh has the authority to approve the composition of the Council of Judges; to approve the president's nominee for the presidency of the Central Bank and, under circumstances prescribed by law, to approve the dismissal of this official; to appoint half of the members of the Central Election and Referendum Commission (CERC) from among candidates nominated by the president and to appoint the other half directly; to decide on the dismissal of these members under circumstances prescribed by law; to appoint one-third of the members of the Court of Accounts from among candidates nominated by the president and to appoint the remaining two-thirds directly; to elect the Akyikatchy (ombudsman); to appoint the Prosecutor General upon the president's proposal and to dismiss the Prosecutor General upon the president's request with the approval of at least half of its total membership; to dismiss the Prosecutor General upon the proposal of one-third of its members and with the approval of at least two-thirds of its members; and to receive annual reports from the Akyikatchy, the CERC, the Prosecutor General, the Central Bank, and the Court of Accounts, and to hear the heads of these institutions.

As noted, the constitution introduces a model in which half of the members of the CERC are chosen by the president and the other half by parliament. The appointment of candidates selected by the president also requires parliamentary approval. First, the new arrangement broadens the president's initiative, as previously the president appointed only one-third of the members. Second, it abolishes the quota formerly allocated to parliamentary opposition. The constitution contains no provisions regarding the number of candidates to be proposed for the CERC or the nature of the required approval. It is unclear whether parliament is obliged to choose from among the nominated candidates or what procedure must be followed if the Jogorku Kenesh refuses to approve them. The model grants a president who enjoys majority support in the Jogorku Kenesh strong determinative power over the CERC, which supervises the country's elections. In any case, the president and parliamentary deputies who support him



gain a strong position in determining the composition of the CERC through coordinated action (Venice Commission, 2021, pp. 27-28).

According to Article 83 of the constitution, the quorum for parliamentary sessions is an absolute majority of the total number of deputies. Article 86 establishes that the decision-making quorum is also an absolute majority of the total number of deputies. These high thresholds could potentially be used in the future to block parliamentary activity.

The power to propose legislation is granted to ten thousand voters, to the president, to deputies, to the People's Kurultai, and, on matters within their competence, to the high courts and the Prosecutor General. A law adopted by the Jogorku Kenesh is sent to the president, who must express his position on the law within 14 days. If the president returns the law to parliament for reconsideration, the Jogorku Kenesh must adopt it again with at least a two-thirds majority of its total membership before resubmitting it to the president. In this case, the president is obliged to sign the law within 14 days.

The constitutional laws, frequently referenced in the regulation of strategic matters within the constitution, are enacted by the Jogorku Kenesh with at least a two-thirds majority of its total membership, subject to the condition of three mandatory readings (Article 86.5). This arrangement ties any subsequent amendment of constitutional laws—which directly affect the functioning of the political system—to highly stringent conditions. Such a framework may make it more difficult to resolve political crises that may arise between institutions in the future.

People's Kurultai

Article 7 of the 2021 Constitution refers to a new constitutional institution under the name People's Kurultai. In fact, the practice of the People's Kurultai is not new in Kyrgyzstan. In previous periods, the Kurultai was also included within the system. However, this is the first time the Kurultai has been established as a constitutional institution. The fact that the People's Kurultai—an institution which previously lacked influence in governance and was largely characterized by its folkloric and symbolic qualities tied to presidential authority—has now been given constitutional status suggests, especially in light of Central Asian political practice, that it may acquire a different function within the political system. The constitution states that the decisions of the People's Kurultai are of an advisory body. Yet it also stipulates that the Kurultai has an oversight function over state organs. The constitution does not regulate the composition of the Kurultai or the method of selecting its members, stating only that these procedures shall be regulated by constitutional law. In this respect, the question arises of



whether Kyrgyzstan will move toward a model similar to Turkmenistan's Halk Maslahaty. The Halk Maslahaty, which was structured above all state organs in Turkmenistan, particularly during the presidency of Saparmurat Niyazov (Türkmenbaşı), served as a mechanism for legitimizing presidential authority and the policies it produced (Šír, 2005, pp. 321-330). The powers granted to the People's Kurultai in the 2021 Constitution may potentially weaken the position of the elected legislative body within the political system (Partlett, 2021, p.8). The Venice Commission has also emphasized that the constitutional authorization of the Kurultai could, in the future, lead to the Jogorku Kenesh being bypassed and to the emergence of an alternative legislative process, and that a clearer constitutional regulation of the Kurultai's status, structure, and functions is necessary (Venice Commission, 2021, pp. 12-16).

Following the adoption of the constitution, the first regulation concerning the People's Kurultai was the Temporary Regulation dated 18 August 2022. Article 2 of this regulation states that the Kurultai "addresses issues of great national importance such as ensuring the reconciliation of the interests of citizens, local communities, local self-government bodies, and state authorities in matters of public concern; the economic and social development of society and the state; national security; the protection of citizens' rights and freedoms; the development of civil society; and the resolution of moral-ideological issues." These provisions define the scope of authority far beyond that of a merely advisory organ. The same Regulation also assigns the Kurultai a role in contributing to the consolidation of society around the implementation of national interests. The Temporary Regulation sets the number of delegates of the People's Kurultai at one thousand. Of these delegates, 960 are selected from administrative-territorial units, 28 from among citizens working abroad, and 10 from religious groups in the country. The vast majority of delegates selected from administrative regions (904 persons) come from villages. This composition indicates that the Kurultai will be predominantly composed of members from rural areas. Delegates are selected by local kurultais. Delegates from abroad are selected by organizations recognized by the state, and representatives of religious groups are chosen by competent bodies also recognized by the state. Delegates serve a one-year term. The Kurultai adopts its decisions by open voting. The Council of Elders (Aksakals Council), established within the Kurultai, functions as the working body of the People's Kurultai and exercises its powers outside of Kurultai meetings. A decisive role is given to the president in the functioning of the Kurultai. For instance, the president may submit matters that fall within the Kurultai's mandate and require urgent resolution to the Council of Elders for consideration



and decision-making. This provision grants the president the ability to ensure Kurultai-level decision-making even in periods when the Kurultai itself is not in session, effectively through a smaller group (Kırgız Respublikası Prezidenti, No: 284, 2022).

Later, on 24 July 2023, a constitutional law on the People's Kurultai was adopted, expanding the framework established by the Temporary Regulation. The law lists the matters to be discussed by the Kurultai as including calling referendums; proposing concepts, programs, and draft laws related to the development of society and the state; spiritual and cultural development; the protection of national traditions and heritage; mutual relations between the state and religious denominations; resolving interregional and interethnic disputes and conflicts; human rights and freedoms; environmental issues; and other matters of importance. Within this framework, the law provides that the Kurultai shall hear presentations from state bodies regarding the fundamental directions of Kyrgyzstan's socioeconomic and sociopolitical development (including reports from the Speaker of the Jogorku Kenesh, the Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers, members of the Cabinet, and heads of state bodies) and may adopt advisory resolutions regarding these matters. Additionally, the Kurultai is granted significant powers such as electing its representative to the Council of Judges and making recommendations to the president regarding the dismissal of cabinet members and the heads of executive bodies (Cogorku Kenesh, No: 146, 2023). Furthermore, a Secretariat of the People's Kurultai was established by a decision of the Cabinet of Ministers on 19 December 2023. The Secretariat's financial resources are provided directly by the Ministry of Finance, and its premises are provided by the Presidential Administration. Through this structure, it can be said that the People's Kurultai—an institution sharing representative functions with the legislature—has become dependent on the executive authority (KR Ministrler Kabineti, No: 681, 2023). Indeed, initial observations since the establishment of the Kurultai support this conclusion (Amanaliev and Kuramaeva, 2025, p.48-53; Martyniuk et al., 2023, p. 252).

Judicial System

The constitution stipulates that appointments to the two major high judicial bodies of the country—the Supreme Court and the Constitutional Court—shall be made from among judges between the ages of 40 and 70 who have at least fifteen years of professional experience. For membership in the Supreme Court, an additional requirement of at least five years of service as a judge is stipulated. There is no such additional requirement for membership in the Constitutional Court. The president is authorized to appoint the presidents of both courts from



among their members, from the candidates proposed by the Council of Judges. Members of both courts may be removed from office upon the recommendation of the president and with the approval of at least a two-thirds majority of the total membership of the Jogorku Kenesh. The constitution establishes “impeccability” as a prerequisite for a judge to remain in office and maintain his authority. This expression is quite vague and open to different interpretations. Considering that the procedure for the dismissal of judges is structured around the president’s authority, the potential implications of this provision become clearer (Venice Commission, 2021, p. 21,24).

Another judicial institution endowed with strategic powers under the constitution is the Council of Judges. Two-thirds of the members of this Council are selected by judges through internal elections, while one-third are selected by the Jogorku Kenesh from among candidates nominated by the president, the Jogorku Kenesh, the People’s Kurultai, and representatives of the legal profession. The most strategic power granted to the Council is the authority to identify candidates for membership in the Constitutional Court and the Supreme Court and to submit these nominees to the president. Considering the strategic roles played by these two high courts in the functioning of the political system, this authority alone illustrates the importance of the Council. The Constitutional Court, for instance, is authorized to submit to parliament the report necessary for initiating impeachment proceedings against the president. Both high courts also hold strategic powers in the appointment of local judges. Given that two-thirds of the members of the Council are elected by judges, it may be stated that the Council plays a crucial role in the country’s judicial system and, more broadly, in the political system as a whole. Therefore, it is noteworthy that the Council does not appear as a separate heading in the constitution and that the constitution does not include detailed provisions regarding the Council’s establishment. Article 96.8 of the constitution states only that the organization, powers, and procedures of the Council of Judges shall be regulated by constitutional law. Thus, the dominant tendency in the 2021 Constitution—namely, regulating significant institutions and matters not in the constitution but by law—also applies to the Council of Judges.

The Constitutional Law on the Council of Judges, dated 15 November 2021, establishes the fundamental framework of the Council. The Council consists of twelve members, eight of whom (two-thirds) are elected judges, while four members are selected from among candidates proposed by the president, the Jogorku Kenesh, the People’s Kurultai, and the legal community. It is understood from the parliamentary Rules of Procedure that one of the members of the



Council will be a deputy of the Jogorku Kenesh. Likewise, it is understood from the Rules of Procedure that representatives of the legal community will be selected from among a maximum of four candidates nominated by the bar association. Apart from this, the number of candidates to be proposed is not explicitly regulated (Venice Commission, 2023, pp. 48-49). According to the law, the primary duty of the Council is to identify candidates for vacant judgeships of the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court, and local courts, and to submit appointment recommendations. These candidates are identified through written examinations and interviews and are then submitted to the president. As noted, the candidates nominated by the Council are then submitted to the Jogorku Kenesh for approval. The Council has the authority to request information, documents, and other materials from state bodies and local self-government organs, and, if necessary, to hear officials from these institutions or demand written explanations. This provision grants the Council a type of supervisory power beyond its explicitly stated mandate (Cogorku Keneş, No: 137, 2022).

Another issue to be emphasized regarding the judiciary is the manner in which the institution of the Prosecutor General is regulated and the extent of its powers. The constitution grants the Prosecutor General the authority to conduct criminal prosecution, participate in judicial proceedings, and supervise the execution of court decisions. Granting such authority to the Prosecutor General may allow this power to be used in practice as a broad “supervisory” authority. As noted, the Prosecutor General plays a key role in the removal of the president. The important powers constitutionally granted to an office that works closely with the president and whose appointment is strongly influenced by the president are of critical significance in terms of the balance between the legislative and executive branches (Venice Commission, 2021, pp. 25-26). According to the parliamentary Rules of Procedure, the appointment and dismissal of the Prosecutor General upon the president’s proposal requires the approval of at least half of the total number of deputies. By contrast, the parliament may dismiss the Prosecutor General directly with at least a two-thirds majority of its total membership (Venice Commission, 2023, p. 4). Considering both the constitutional and procedural provisions, it is evident that the president holds a stronger position over the office of the Prosecutor General.

Based on the assessments of the 2021 Kyrgyz Constitution, the resulting findings are discussed in the following conclusion.



CONCLUSION

The concept of the political constitution asserts that constitutions, beyond being legal documents, are products of a political construct starting from their formation processes. The empirical institutionalist approach focuses on the effects that the organizational structure of political institutions in constitutions has on the functioning of political life. These effects—foreseen or unforeseen—play a decisive role in the success or failure of political systems. Kyrgyzstan represents a distinctive example in establishing the relationship between political competition and constitutional design. Since independence, conflicts between presidents and local political actors have played a determining role in the political life and constitutional development of the country. The 2021 Kyrgyzstan Constitution, formulated after the power change in 2020, constitutes a noteworthy example in this regard. Above all, the 2021 Constitution refers to Kyrgyz traditions and values, indicating that such traditions will serve as references in the regulation of human rights and in the functioning of political institutions. A framework of this nature, which may be interpreted differently by everyone, will render the interpretations of political actors—especially presidents—decisive. Therefore, the new constitution opens the door to subjective evaluations between traditions and the functioning of political institutions.

Another characteristic of the 2021 Kyrgyzstan Constitution is that strategic institutions are regulated through general expressions, while other important issues concerning the functioning of these institutions are often left to ordinary laws. Keeping the legislative domain concerning strategic institutions quite broad points to the possibility of potential areas of conflict emerging in the future between political institutions and actors. At the same time, this situation grants the legislative majority—or a president who enjoys majority support in the legislature—the opportunity to enact vital regulations concerning the political system through ordinary legislation. Limitations related to rights and freedoms in the constitution, the status of the People's Kurultai, the status of the Council of Judges, the president's powers over self-government bodies, the electoral system, and the status of former presidents may all be cited as examples of such arrangements.

Another feature of the constitution is that it contains gaps in many areas. For example, when examining the regulation of the People's Kurultai, one gains the impression that the country will have two legislative bodies together with the Jogorku Kenesh. While the constitution provides only a general and brief regulation concerning the Kurultai, an



examination of the relevant laws and regulations reveals that this institution is endowed with extensive powers. The constitution's description of the president as the highest authoritative organ of the state places the president in a position to give the final word in disputes among political institutions. In such a case, how other constitutional institutions will act remains unclear. The constitution does not include explanatory provisions regarding the relationship between the president and the chair of the cabinet. In the constitution, the president submits proposals for numerous offices to the legislature, yet it remains unclear what procedures will be followed in the event that the legislature refuses to approve the proposed candidates. Whether a minister who has received a vote of no confidence from parliament will be dismissed is also not clearly regulated in the constitution. The requirement that judges may remain in office only if they are "impeccable" is yet another example of vague gaps. The possibility that these gaps may be used to the advantage of the stronger political actor or side through interpretation in disputes between the president, the legislature, and the judiciary is quite high.

Although the new constitution distributes political powers between the president and the legislature, it lays the groundwork for potential areas of conflict by including vague provisions and by leaving many strategic issues to be regulated by law. Considering the country's constitutional development, one of the fundamental problems appears to be the conflict between presidents and the alliances of local political opposition groups. Furthermore, in the three violent power transitions the country has experienced, the conflict took place through the relationship between the president and the legislature, and this situation has shaped the constitution-making process. Presidents have attempted to overcome this problem either by forming multifaceted alliances with local political actors against weak political parties or by directly establishing a dominant state party in order to structure the system around their own power. None of these attempts in Kyrgyzstan enabled presidents to achieve the outcomes they desired. Conversely, the shifting opposition alliances that have played roles in power transitions have favored constitutional formulas suitable for protecting their own spheres of influence rather than establishing an institutionalized structure. As a result, conflict has re-emerged each time, and these conflicts have been reflected in the constitution-making process.

Why, then, does the 2021 Constitution adopt an approach that deepens this situation? In many respects, the constitution gives the impression that powers are shared between the president and the legislature, resembling the 2007 constitution of former president Bakiyev. As noted, immediately after the adoption of the 2007 constitution, Bakiyev enacted a new electoral



law that diminished the power of local political actors and enabled—for the first time—a single party to achieve a strong majority in the Jogorku Kenesh, thereby gaining the ability to fully utilize all constitutional powers. In this sense, the fact that the 2021 Constitution—shaped decisively by President Caparov—leaves wide room for statutory regulation in strategic matters is meaningful. President Caparov may, like Bakiyev, pursue legislative arrangements that would enable the formation of a dominant state party, or he may rely on his relations with local regional leaders to form alliances through which he could secure majority support in the legislature. Developments following the adoption of the constitution offer hints that President Caparov is more likely to pursue the latter course. The new electoral law enacted in 2025 and the early Jogorku Kenesh elections that followed indicate the potential direction of the new period in Kyrgyzstan.

According to the new electoral law of 2025, the country was divided into thirty electoral districts for the 90-member Jogorku Kenesh, with each district electing three deputies. In the elections, political parties may nominate candidates, but independent candidacies are also possible. Candidates are required to have completed higher education. A political party may nominate one candidate in each district, and the three candidates receiving the most votes are deemed elected. In practice, this arrangement results in a situation where, even if a party's candidates win in all districts, the party may have a maximum of 30 deputies in parliament. Therefore, the new electoral system prevents any single party from obtaining a majority in the legislature. The new law also increases the electoral deposit required of parties, thereby raising the cost of entering elections. Additionally, one of the three seats in each district is reserved for the women's quota. In other words, the female candidate receiving the most votes among women in a district is considered elected within the quota framework, regardless of the votes obtained by other candidates or parties. For the remaining two seats, deputies are determined based on vote rankings among parties and independent candidates. The new electoral system grants voters the right to vote against all candidates. In other words, voters may veto all candidates by voting against them. Consequently, electoral districts may emerge in which representation problems arise. This legal framework indicates that in the new period, the power of political parties in Kyrgyzstan will be limited, and individuals from local political actors and bureaucratic cadres will gain a stronger position in the legislative process as independent candidates. It may be said that the new system will further weaken party structures in Kyrgyzstan, where the party system is already weak (OSCE, 2025, pp. 13-20). Following the



changes to the electoral law, the Jogorku Kenesh decided on its dissolution on 25 September 2025, and President Caparov announced that early parliamentary elections would be held on 30 November. Prior to the elections, the leaders of the Social Democratic Party—associated with former President Almazbek Atambayev—were arrested on the grounds of engaging in vote-buying during the 2024 municipal elections, and the party was prevented from entering the parliamentary elections. Thus, the most institutionalized opposition party was excluded from the electoral race. In the elections, in which voter turnout reached 37%, there was no electoral competition based on party lists. Many individuals—most of whom had also been deputies in the previous term—ran as independent candidates. The result produced a new parliament where half of the members were former deputies, where political parties had effectively disappeared from the political scene, and where bureaucrats supported by local clans constituted the majority. Assessments converge on the view that the common feature of the new parliament’s composition is loyalty to President Caparov (Ibragimova, 2025; Light & Turgunbaeva, 2025). It is too early, however, to assert that these outcomes will produce a permanent leader-compliant parliament relationship unique to the Kyrgyz case. Caparov is in fact a new leader attempting to achieve what previous presidents sought to accomplish; whether he will succeed, or whether he will face outcomes similar to those experienced by former leaders, will be revealed by time.

REFERENCES

- Alkan, H. (2009). Post-Soviet politics in Kyrgyzstan: Between centralism and localism? *Contemporary Politics*, 15(3), 355-375, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13569770903118754>
- Alkan, H. (2011). *Orta Asya Türk Cumhuriyetlerinde siyasal hayat ve kurumlar*. USAK Yayını.
- Alkan, H. (2012). Türk cumhuriyetlerinde siyasal kurumsallaşma süreci: Geçen yirmi yılın bir bilançosu. *Bilig*, (61), 1-30.
- Amanaliyev, U. O. & Kuramaeva, N. O. (2025). Eldik Kurultay cana anın koomdogu ordu: Teoriyalık-Ukuktuk taldo. *Vestnik KRSU*, 25(3), 48-53.
- Bellamy, R. (2023). Political constitutionalism. P. Cane, H. Kumarasingham (Eds.), *The Cambridge constitutional history of the United Kingdom*. (pp. 59-87). Cambridge University Press.
- Bisarya, S. (2022). No half-measures—from semi-presidentialism to full presidential systems in Kyrgyzstan and Haiti. *Annual review of constitution-building: 2021*. (pp. 46-61). Sthockholm: IDEA.
- Cairney, P. (2012). *Understanding public policy*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Cogorku Keneş (2022). Kırgız Respublikasının adilet işteri boyunça Keneşi cönündö. *Konstitutsiyalık Mıyzamı* No: 137.
- Cogorku Keneş (2023). Eldik (uluttuk) Kurultay cönündö, Kırgız Respublikasının Konstitutsiyalık Mıyzamı No: 146.



- Collins, K. (2002). "Clans, pacts, and politics in Central Asia. *Journal of Democracy*, 13(3), 137-152. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1353/jod.2002.0041>.
- Constitutional Court of the Kyrgyz Republic (2022). The Constitution the Kyrgyz Republic. <https://constsof.kg/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/constitution-of-the-kyrgyz-republic.pdf>
- Çorotekin, T. (2002). Kırgızistan cumhuriyeti. A. Birinci ve H. C. Güzel (Ed.), *Genel Türk Tarihi* (Cilt 10, ss. 219-269), Yeni Türkiye Yayınları.
- Doolotkeldieva, A. (2023). Uncovering the revolutionaries from epistemic injustice: The politics of popular revolts in Kyrgyzstan: An introduction to the special issue. *Central Asian Affairs*, 10(2), 99-122.
- Dzhuray, E. (2025). An (almost) *laissez faire* party system: How Kyrgyz parties failed and what could be done about it. *Policy Studies*, (10), 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01442872.2025.2538849>
- Felix, L. & Turgunbaeva, A. (2025, November 30). Allies of Kyrgyzstan's strongman president sweep snap parliamentary election. *Reuters*. <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/allies-kyrgyzstans-president-win-majority-parliamentary-election-preliminary-2025-11-30/>
- Fumagalli, M. (2016). Semi-presidentialism in Kyrgyzstan. R. Elgie, S. Moestrup (Eds.), *Semi-presidentialism in the Caucasus and Central Asia*. (pp. 173-205). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Gyene, P. (2022). Kyrgyzstan's three revolutions (2005, 2010, 2020) and the political sustainability of the Kyrgyz parliamentary experiment (2010-2021). N. Iván, M. Kovács-Gergely (Eds.), *Eurasia: An emerging concept?* (pp. 71-96). Budapest Business School.
- Ibragimova, G. (2025, November 28). What's behind electoral reform in Kyrgyzstan? *Carnegie Politika*. <https://carnegieendowment.org/russia-eurasia/politika/2025/11/kyrgyzstan-parliamentary-reform?lang=en>,
- International Crisis Group. (2001). Kyrgyzstan at ten: Trouble in the 'island of democracy' (Asia Report No: 22). ICG Pub.
- Ishiyama, J. T. & Kennedy, R. (2001). Superpresidentialism and political party development in Russia, Ukraine, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan. *Europe-Asia Studies*, 53(8), 1177-1191. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09668130120093183>
- Khamidov, A. (2002, June 5). Kyrgyzstan's unrest linked to clan rivalries. *Eurasia Insight*, <https://eurasianet.org/kyrgyzstans-unrest-linked-to-clan-rivalries>
- Kırgız Respublikasının Ministrler Kabineti (2023). Kırgız Respublikasının ministrler kabinetinin 2023-c. 19-dekabrdagi No: 681 toktomy — 'Eldik kurultaydın katçılıgı mamlekettik mekemesin tüzüü cana anın cobosun bekitüü cönündö' <https://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/230003627/edition/5349/kg>
- Kırgız Respublikası Prezidenti (2022). Eldik Kurultay cönündö ubaktyluu cobo (Prezidenttin Carlygy Menen Bektilgen), 18.08.2022; PZh No: 284. <https://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/434801/edition/1255782/kg>
- Kolstoe, P. (1995). *Russians in the former Soviet Republics*. Hurst & Company.
- Kulikova, S. V. (2007, February 28). *From a democratic reformer to a weak authoritarian: Transformation of the Kyrgyz Republic's first president Askar Akayev*. International Studies Association 48th Annual Convention, Chicago, 1-23. http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p_mla_apa_research_citation/1/7/9/1/7/pages179175/p179175-2.php
- Martyniuk, R., Datsiuk, O., Romanov, M. & Khomych, T. (2023). The constitutional referendum in Kyrgyzstan on April 11, 2021, or the restoration of post-Soviet authoritarianism. *European Journal of Transformation Studies*, 11(2), 235-262.



- Matveeva, A. (1999). Democratization, legitimacy and political change in Central Asia. *International Affairs*, 75(1), 23-44. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2346.00058>
- Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (2025). Opinion on draft constitutional law on amendments to the constitutional law 'on elections of the president of the Kyrgyz Republic and members of Jogorku Kenesh of the Kyrgyz Republic (Nr: ODIHR-541/2025). OSCE-ODIHR.
- Partlett, W. (2021). *Kyrgyzstan's 2021 constitution: A brief comparative and historical analysis*. Melbourne: University of Melbourne Legal Studies Research Paper No. 944.
- Peters, B. G. (2000). *Institutional theory: Problems and prospects*. IHS Working Papers.
- Radnitz, S. (2005). Networks, localism and mobilization in Aksy, Kyrgyzstan. *Central Asian Survey*, 24(4), 405-424. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02634930500453368>
- Sershen, D. (2007, October 23). President strives to finish off political opponents. *Eurasia Insight*, <https://eurasianet.org/kyrgyzstan-president-strives-to-finish-off-political-opponents>
- Šír, J. (2005). Halk Maslahaty in the context of the constitutional evolution of post-Soviet Turkmenistan., *Perspectives on European Politics and Society*, 6(2), 321-330. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15705850508438921>
- Temirkoulov, A. (2004). *Tribalism, social conflict, and state-building in the Kyrgyz Republic*. Berliner Osturopa Institut.
- Venice Commission. (2021). Kyrgyzstan joint opinion on the draft constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic (No. 1021/2021). OSCE/ODIHR.
- Venice Commission. (2023). Kyrgyzstan law on the rules of procedure of the Jogorku Kenesh of the Kyrgyz Republic (No. 1122/2023). Venice Commission.